

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 DHA-02 SAM-01 IO-10 SCCT-01 SY-05

SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 SIL-01

LAB-04 /095 W

----- 036784

R 291759Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3588

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL STRASTOURG

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 25155

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SP, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH REACTIONS TO SPANISH EXECUTIONS

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REFS: PARIS 24763 AND 25059

SUMMARY. FRENCH REACTION TO RECENT EVENTS IN SPAIN HAS BEEN WIDESPREAD AND OCCASIONALLY VIOLENT. POLITICAL COMMENT FOR MOST PART IS CRITICAL OF RELATIVE GOVERNMENT SILENCE DURING PERIOD PRECEDING AND FOLLOWING EXECUTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. FRENCH REACTION TO WEEKEND EVENTS IN SPAIN WAS IMMEDIATE AND OFTEN VIOLENT. LARGE DEMONSTRATIONS IN PARIS ORGANIZED BY THE LEFT TO PROTEST DEATH SENTENCES FOR FIVE SPANISH DISSIDENTS BEGAN PEACEFULLY SEPTEMBER 26, BUT LATER THAT EVENING DEGENERATED INTO WINDOW-SMASHING AND CAR-BURNING EPISODES ALONG THE CHAMPS-ELYSEES. PARIS SPANISH TOURIST OFFICE WAS BURNED AND NEXT AFTERNOON CHRYSLER SIMCA SHOWROOM WRECKED BY BOMB. IN NANTES AND OTHER FRENCH CITIES, MOBS ATTACKED SPANISH CONSULATES AND LIBRARIES.

2. REACTION IN POLITICAL CIRCLES WAS EQUALLY SHARP AND UNUSUALLY WIDESPREAD. CRITICS, AND NOT ONLY THOSE OF THE LEFT, ARE TAKING THE GOVERNMENT TO TASK FOR ITS RELATIVE SILENCE DURING DAYS LEADING UP TO AND FOLLOWING EXECUTIONS. FRONT PAGE ARTICLE IN FIGARO NOTES THAT ONLY THREE MAJOR GOVERNMENT FIGURES, FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES, MINISTER OF HEALTH VEIL AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WOMEN'S AFFAIRS GIROUD HAVE ISSUED PERSONAL STATEMENTS DEPLORING THE EXECUTIONS. THE LIBERAL QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS IN A FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL ENTITLED "FRANCO ALONE...WITH GISCARD" DESCRIBES THE GOVERNMENT'S RELATIVE SILENCE AS NOT ONLY IMMORAL, BUT A POLITICAL MISTAKE AS WELL. EVEN THE CONSERVATIVE FINANCIAL JOURNAL LES ECHOS REPORTS PUBLIC INDIGNATION AS WIDESPREAD ON GOVERNMENT SILENCE.

3. PREDICTABLY, CRITICISM FROM THE LEFT HAS BEEN THE MOST VITRIOLIC. COMMUNIST (PCF) SECRETARY-GENERAL MARCHAIS, IN A STATEMENT CALLING FOR SUSPENDING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH MADRID, BRANDED GISCARD AS AN ACCOMPLICE TO THE EXECUTIONS FOR NOT HAVING TAKEN STRONGER PUBLIC STAND. ECHOING THE QUOTIDIEN, PCF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EDITORIALIST RENE ANDRIEU SCORED A POINT BY NOTING THAT GISCARD, "ORDINARILY SO PROLIX, IN VAUNTING LIBERAL SOCIETY FOUND NOT A WORD TO INDICT THIS CRIME."

4. CENTER PARTY SPOKESMEN HAVE GENERALLY DRAWN BACK FROM BLAMING GISCARD PERSONALLY, BUT NEVERTHELESS, BY

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CALLS FOR MORE DRASTIC ACTION, ARE OFFERING HIM LITTLE
COMFORT. THUS, REFORMER FEDERATION VICE PRESIDNT

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JEAN-MARIE DAILLET HAS ASKED FOR TERMINATION OF EC-SPANISH CONSULTATIONS AIMED AT EVENTUAL COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP FOR SPAIN. BERNARD STASI, ANOTHER CENTER LEADER, BY WAY OF IMPLIED CRITICISM, IS QUOTED AS SAYING: "NO REFORMER CAN REMAIN SILENT IN THE FACE OF ATTACKS ON HUMAN LIBERTY."

5. RACTION ON THE RIGHT HAS BEEN LESS CLEARCUT. MOST SPOKESMEN HAVE CRITICIZED EXECUTIONS IN SPAIN BUT WITH THE SAME BREATH ARE DEPLORING VIOLENCE ON THE CHAMPS-ELYSEES, OR ARE NOTING THAT DANGER TO HUMAN RIGHTS IS EQUALLY AS GREAT IN EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES.

6. COMMENT. SPANISH EXECUTIONS AND RESULTING FRENCH REACTION HAVE CLEARLY PLACED GOVERNMENT IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION. ELYSEE SPOKESMEN NOW SEEM TO BE TRYING TO MAKE UP FOR LOST GROUND BY REMINDING PUBLIC OF PREVIOUS FRENCH ACTIONS SUCH AS PARTICIPATION IN JOINT EC DEMARCHE. GISCARD IS ALSO MEETING SEPTEMBER 29 WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO MADRID. HOWEVER, GIVEN WIDESPREAD NEGATIVE REACTION TO GOF STAND PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND CALLING IN AN AMBASSADOR PROBABLY WILL NOT BE ENOUGH TO CALM CRITICISM. THE COMMUNISTS, IN PARTICULAR, SEE THE ISSUE AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO POSE AS DEFENDERS OF LIBERTY, A MOST WELCOME ROLE FOLLOWING THEIR EMBARRASSMENT OVER PORTUGAL. THUS THEY CAN B COUNTED ON TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC FEELING AT FEVER PITCH. TOGETHER WITH UNIONS, COMMUNISTS HAVE CALLED FOR YET ANOTHER ANTI-FRANCO DEMONSTRATION SEPTEMBER 29.
RUSH

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